

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for making an edge fold on an absorbent article having longitudinal edges comprising the steps of:
  - activating a portion of an absorbent article along its longitudinal edges;
  - folding a portion of the absorbent article along its longitudinal edges; and
  - bonding a portion of the absorbent article along its longitudinal edges.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of cutting a portion of the absorbent article before the step of folding.
3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of cutting a portion of the absorbent article after the step of bonding.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of activation includes the application of heat to the absorbent article to assist in the activating process.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein the application of heat is applied before the absorbent article is activated.
6. The method of claim 4 wherein the application of heat is applied while the absorbent article is activated.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of folding creates a substantially linear edge fold in the absorbent article.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of folding creates a substantially curved edge fold in the absorbent article.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of activating creates substantially uniform gathers, wherein, a pitch of the gathers is determined by a distance between a set of teeth tips on an activation tooling.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein the process for bonding the portion of the absorbent article disposable that was folded to the absorbent article is selected from the group consisting of

application of adhesive, ultrasonic bonding, compression bonding, thermal bonding, radio frequency bonding, infrared bonding and combinations thereof.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the absorbent article is disposable.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein the absorbent article is selected from the group consisting of disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, pantliners, incontinence briefs, and incontinence undergarments.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of activating is performed along a portion of longitudinal edge which substantially extends between a pair of side panels.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of folding is performed along a portion of longitudinal edge which substantially extends between a pair of side panels.
15. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of bonding is performed along a portion of longitudinal edge which substantially extends between a pair of side panels.
16. A method for forming a crotch region and making an edge fold on a disposable diaper having longitudinal edges without the need for cutting and trim removal, comprising the steps of:
  - activating a portion of a disposable diaper along its longitudinal edges;
  - folding a portion of the disposable diaper along its longitudinal edges; and
  - bonding a portion of the disposable diaper along its longitudinal edges,wherein a crotch region and an edge fold are formed on the disposable diaper without the need for cutting and trim removal.
17. An apparatus for making an absorbent article having an edge fold formed by the method of claim 1.
18. An absorbent article having an edge fold formed by the method of claim 1.
19. A disposable diaper comprising:
  - a topsheet;
  - a backsheet;
  - a barrier leg cuff;

an absorbent core disposed between said topsheet and said backsheet,

at least two longitudinal edges, wherein said longitudinal edges are defined by one or more of the following: said topsheet, said backsheet, said barrier leg cuff; portions of said longitudinal edges defining leg openings when said disposable diaper is worn; and

at least one edge fold along said portions of said longitudinal edges, wherein said edge fold is activated to create substantially uniform gathers.

20. The disposable diaper of claim 19, wherein said edge fold is an inside fold.
21. The disposable diaper of claim 19, wherein said edge fold is an outside fold.